

**ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE**

A FOUP having semiconductor wafers received therein is transferred to a loading port and then the door of the FOUP is fixed and removed by a FIMS door and then the semiconductor wafers are taken out of the shell of the FOUP and then a predetermined manufacturing processing is performed to the semiconductor wafers. After performing the manufacturing processing, the semiconductor wafers are returned into the shell and the FIMS door is returned to a closed position and the shell is retracted about 50 mm to 65 mm to form a gap between the FIMS door and the shell. Then, purge gas is introduced from a gas introduction pipe arranged above the loading port on the left and right sides in a slanting forward direction of the FIMS door into the shell to replace the atmosphere in the shell with the purge gas.